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## SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY ON PSYCHOLOGY OF THE NEAR ENVIRONMENT

Edward R. Ostrander, Lecturer  
New York State College of Human Ecology  
Department of Design and Environmental Analysis

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SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY ON  
PSYCHOLOGY OF THE NEAR ENVIRONMENT

by

Edward R. Ostrander, Lecturer  
New York State College  
of Human Ecology  
Department of Design and  
Environmental Analysis

This bibliography was compiled to acquaint students and other interested practitioners with writing that can be subsumed under the topic of the "Psychology of the Near Environment". The 'near environment' is defined as 'the area between the skin and the walls', thereby including such man-made environmental elements as clothing, furnishing, appliances, interior design, space planning, and facility layout.

As one of the social sciences, 'psychology' is often defined as 'the science of human behavior'. The social sciences attempt to understand natural phenomena through the gathering of empirical data and by systematizing through theory the data made available. When the psychologist speaks of human behavior, he includes both physical activity and verbal representations that express attitudes, values, and preferences.

This bibliography reflects my interest as a social psychologist focusing on the interactions of human beings and the non-social environment. In recent years, the man-environment relationships have come to the attention of researchers and practitioners from many disciplines. Even within disciplines, new labels have emerged so that the list of disciplines includes environmental psychology, ecological psychology, architectural psychology, social

psychology, anthropology, sociology, and geography. Therefore, reports of empirical work, methodology and theory are drawn from many different journals representing academic disciplines as well as the professional literature practitioners rely upon.

This collection of titles brings together some of the relevant references which speak to Robert Sommer's recommendation that behavioral scientists gather data and develop instruments for gaining feedback from users of the built environment.

The bibliography covers four major topics and the subtopics shown in the outline below:

- I. Definition of the Field, Scope and Perspective (30 items)
- II. User Feedback Methodology
  - A. General (21 items)
  - B. Specific (30 items)
- III. Theoretical Orientations in Psychology (20 items)
- IV. Theoretical and Empirical Viewpoints
  - A. Perceptual-Cognitive (6 items)
  - B. Psychometric-Individual Differences (6 items)
  - C. Observational-Anthropological (3 items)
  - D. Ecological Psychology (5 items)
  - E. Nomothetic Empirical (6 items)
  - F. British Building Evaluation and Architectural Psychology (5 items)
  - G. Institutional Functionality (6 items)

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF THE NEAR ENVIRONMENT  
A Course Syllabus

Catalogue

Description: Design and Environmental Analysis 455

An exploration of the interaction of human beings and the immediate non-social environment. This interaction will be considered in terms of basic psychological processes, including perception, learning, and motivation. Application of psychological principles will be made to clothing and the setting in which we live, work, and play.

Credit: 3 hours. Prerequisite: 1 year of Introductory Psychology

Objectives:

1. Define and clarify the scope of the field of study labeled the psychology of the near environment that draws on the behavioral sciences for its theory, methods and content, but directs its focus to the interrelationship of behavior and the near environment.
2. Gain a working knowledge of the data gathering approaches and methods that provide an empirical basis for design decisions and may contribute to the development of more humane environments.
3. Develop a familiarity with the writings of the major contributors to the theory and empirical work focusing on the interdisciplinary study of man-environment relations.
4. Develop a critical perspective for evaluating research work and explore in depth selected pieces of empirical work relating human functioning and design effectiveness.
5. Sharpen tool skills essential for those involved in empirically rooted decision making and working professionally in an interdisciplinary setting. These skills include:
  - . Conceptualizing researchable problems
  - Data gathering, analyzing, and interpreting
  - Proficiency in written, oral and graphic communication
  - Ability to give and take constructive criticism
  - Interpersonal collaboration

Instructional  
Philosophy &  
Approach:

Course goals will be pursued in different physical settings and through diverse activities.

The teacher plays a resource role and will provide a frame of reference, a flexibly structured sequence of assignments, tasks, and encounters. He has assembled a list of library reference sources and developed written material designed to enable the student to proceed quite independently.

The student is largely responsible for his own progress in the course and there is a premium on student initiative, ingenuity, independence, and pride in his performance.

The products of student effort will be made public to their classmates, other students, faculty, and professionals within and outside the university. This practice is followed in many design courses and apparently this public sharing helps to define a norm of quality performance. It expands the learning experience in a variety of ways that are impossible when only the instructor is acquainted with the student's work.

Overview

Table 1. Objectives, Presentation Mode and Content of the Course

<u>Objectives</u>	<u>Mode</u>	<u>Content</u>
Context-Scope	Lecture with Visuals	Definition, history, scope, problems, and issues
Methodology	Lab &/or Field Activity	Data gathering methods & basics of sound research
Theory	Independent paper	Application of major theory to problem of personal interest
Application	Group Projects in Field	Small scale interdisciplinary data gathering project on man-environmental linkages

Continuation: Table 1.

<u>Objectives</u>	<u>Mode</u>	<u>Content</u>
Interpretation	Presentation of Group Project Findings & Implications	Problem, methods, sample, findings and implications
Integration	Small & Large Group Discussion	Unification of course experiences, knowledge, skills and identification of critical issues

Course Schedule

& Key Dates: Table 2. Topical Focus, Pace, Evaluation Activity, Due Date and Weight

<u>Classes</u>	<u>Topical Focus</u>	<u>Activity</u>	<u>Due Date</u>	<u>Weight</u>
1-6	Preview of Major Segments of Course	Take-Home Exam	Feb. 7	15
7-14	Environmental Analysis Methods: In Lab & Field	Report	Feb. 23	15
15-21	Applications: Theory & Empirical	Paper	Mar. 10	20
22-30	Group Project: Interdisciplinary approach to man-environment problem	Report	Apr. 7	40
31-36	Presentations of Field Project to Class	Present- tation	Apr. 10 to Apr. 21	10
37-42	Discussion of man-environment issues & actions	Open Forum		

Text Books: Sommer, Robert. Personal space: The behavioral basis of design. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1969.

Hall, Edward. The silent language. Greenwich, Conn.: Fawcett Publications, 1963. (A Premier Book)

Hall, Edward. The hidden dimension. Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, 1969. (Anchor Books A-609)

Toffler, Alan. Future shock. New York: Bantam Books, 1971.

Ostrander, Edward. The psychology of the near environment: A Handbook. Ithaca, New York: New York State College of Human Ecology, 1972. (Mimeo)

Reserve Readings:

The reading list on the following pages supplements the six introductory lectures and provides references for the activities being carried out in the course.

The areas included are:

Definition of the field, scope and perspective

User Feedback Methodology

Theoretical Orientations: General and Specific

Reserve readings are located in Mann Library. They are on two hour reserve.

## DEFINITION OF THE FIELD, SCOPE AND PERSPECTIVE

This selected list of references includes, books, journal articles and papers presented at meetings or conferences. An asterisk (\*) indicates readings that are basic for an understanding of the issue.

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- \* Griffin, W.V., J.H. Mauritzen, J.V. Kasmar. The psychological aspects of the architectural environment: A review. American Journal of Psychiatry, 1969, 125, 93-98.
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- Holland, L. (Ed.) Who designs America? Garden City, New York: Doubleday Anchor, 1966.
- \* Izumi, K. Psycho-social considerations of environmental design. Paper presented at the Fifth NSID National Conference, Palm Springs, California, 1968, 5-14.
- Kates, R.W. & J.F. Wohlwill. Man's response to the physical environment. Journal of Social Issues, 1966, 22 (4), (Whole issue).
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- \* Sommer, R. Personal space: The behavioral basis of design. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1969. See Chapter 1.
- \* Spivack, H. The political collapse of a playground. Landscape Architecture, 1969, 59 (4), 288-291.



- \* Wheeler, L. Multidisciplinary approach to planning. Paper read at 47th Council of Educational Facility Planners, Oklahoma City, 1970.
- \* Wohlwill, J.F. The Physical Environment: A Problem for a Psychology of Stimulation. Journal of Social Issues, 1966, 22 (4), 29-38.
- \* Wohlwill, J.F. The emerging discipline of environment psychology. American Psychologist, 1970, 25, 303-312.

#### USER FEEDBACK METHODOLOGY

These selections include general material on behavioral science research methods. User feedback methods that range from simple unobtrusive approaches to complex measurement techniques are also listed.

#### GENERAL

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- Birdwhistell, R. Still photographs, interviews and filming. In Birdwhistell, R. Kinesics and context. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1970. 147-155.
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